

Indianapolis Charter Schools

Second Year Review

Overview

Charter schools in their 2nd year of operation will participate in an iterative process of evaluation, which includes:

- Fall site team visit
- Fall Special Education file review
- Spring observation
- Spring site team visit

The basic goal of the second year evaluation is to monitor the efforts and the outcomes of the school in meeting the standards documented in the Performance Framework. The efforts of the review team will focus on the following key guiding questions from the framework:

- *Is the educational program a success?*
- *Is the organization effective and well-run?*
- *Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?*
- *Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?*

Throughout the year, CEEP will work with the school staff to provide mentoring and guidance to be sure that the evaluative process is on track and that staff know what is expected. We want to work in partnership with school staff, as a critical friend who can help understand the school's performance.

Process

During the second year, three documents will be produced for each charter school:

1. Fall site visit report (formative)
2. Fall special education file review report
3. Spring site visit report (summative)

During the fall and spring site visits the teams will collect evidence regarding the school's performance through a number of different mechanisms:

- Classroom observations
- Staff focus group conversation
- Leadership/administration focus group conversation
- Parent focus group conversation
- Data/documentation the school provides
 - Evidence related to "common indicators of performance" (see below)
 - School-specific performance goals, assessments, and associated evidence

The site team will collect and analyze evidence during the visits, and discuss strengths and “areas for attention” related to each guiding question with school leadership. The final report to the Mayor’s Office will include both strengths and suggestions. The school will have a chance to review each report and provide input on it prior to its final submission to the Mayor’s Office.

The Performance Framework

Under the Performance Framework, a school’s success will be measured by its performance relative to common indicators of performance established by the Mayor’s Office for all schools it charters and school-specific indicators developed by each school that reflect its mission and unique goals. Each school’s accountability plan is, therefore, based on both common and school-specific indicators.

Common Indicators of Performance

Though each charter school will develop its own indicators of performance, all schools’ success will also be measured by a set of common indicators. These common indicators, many of them required by Indiana state law, will ensure that the public and the Mayor’s Office have some level of common information about all schools chartered by the Mayor. Refer to Appendix 1 for a detailed description of the common indicators, standards of performance, the sources of data that will be used to measure schools’ success on these indicators, and the rating system.

Of particular note, each school must conduct standardized tests of reading and mathematics for students annually. To meet state requirements, schools are required to administer ISTEP+ every fall to students in grades 3-10 (as these tests become available in all grades). The Mayor’s Office has an additional requirement that students be tested annually in the fall and spring in order to collect comparable, longitudinal data to measure student growth over the course of the school year. This consistent year-to-year testing will allow the Mayor’s Office to assess the “value-added” by each school – the degree to which the school contributes to the learning of its students. This kind of analysis will in turn prove critical in the Mayor’s Office’s assessment of school progress.

School-Specific Indicators of Performance

Since each school is unique, it has school-specific goals that are not reflected in the common indicators. The Performance Framework provided above recognizes this fact by including indicators 1.4 and 2.6 as placeholders for school-specific indicators. In addition, indicator 2.2 is “common” in the sense that it applies to all schools, but the specific expected levels of attendance and retention of students will vary by school. Each school will negotiate a set of such indicators with the Mayor’s Office over the course of the first year or two of operation. Section IV of this handbook describes the process for developing the school-specific indicators and Appendix 2 provides templates schools must complete and submit to the Mayor’s Office detailing their goals and measures.

http://www.indygov.org/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Schools/Operating/accountability_handbook.htm

During both visits, and throughout the year, CEEP will work with the schools to provide feedback on the school-specific goals and assessments that have been developed, as well as interpreting results/data related to the indicators common to all schools.